



# BIG MEDIUM 2

## THE COMPLETE GUIDE

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# Chapter 3

## Editing Webpages

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Big Medium’s mission is to make it easy for you to add and edit webpages. Although much of this handbook is dedicated to the finer points of how to tweak the software to shape your site exactly the way that you want it, Big Medium earns its supper in the content editor, where you’ll spend most of your time.

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### The edit menu

When you first sign into Big Medium, you’re greeted by the edit menu. (You can also get to this menu by clicking the “Edit” icon at the top of the Big Medium control panel.) The menu displays all of the content available to your account for editing.

### Selecting and sorting the content to display

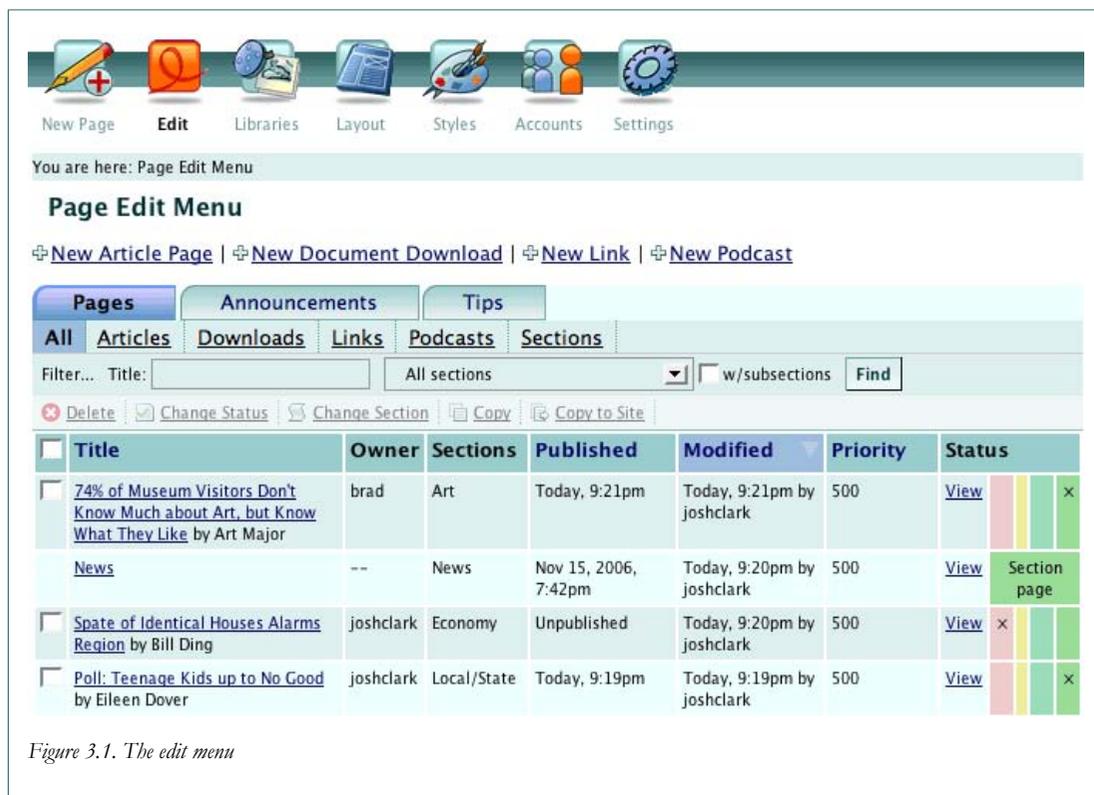
Tabs across the top of the edit menu display the three types of content that you can edit: *pages*, *announcements* and *tips*. We’ll get to announcements and tips in [Chapter 5: Micro-Content: Announcements & Tips](#); for now we’ll focus on pages, which is where most of the action happens.

When you click the “Pages” tab, Big Medium lists all of the pages in the site, and the “All” subtab is highlighted. To show only certain types of pages, you can click on any of the other subtabs which identify the various species of pages: *articles*, *downloads*, *links*, *podcasts* and *sections*.

Within these categories, you can also filter content by title and/or content section. To filter by title, type a portion of the title into the title field below the content tabs, and click “Find.” (If you search for more than one word, Big Medium returns matches for titles that contain *any* of those words.) Likewise, to filter by section, select the section whose content you would like to browse, and click “Find.” To return to viewing all content, clear the title field, select “All sections” and click “Find.”

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The default view displays pages, tips and announcements with the most recently edited (“modified”) items displayed at the top. You can also sort by title, publication date or priority by clicking the appropriate column heading.



## Page information

The edit menu provides the following information about each page:

Title	The title/headline of the page. Clicking the title link takes you to the edit screen for that page. (If you don't have permission to edit that page, no link is offered.)
Owner	The account that owns the page
Sections	The content section(s) in which the page is “filed”
Published	When/if the page was published (or is scheduled to be published) to the live site
Modified	The date when the page was last edited and by whom
Priority	The page's priority setting, which influences its sort order on the live site
Status	The workflow status of the page: <i>draft</i> is red, <i>edit</i> is yellow, <i>ready</i> is teal, and <i>published</i> is green. Until a page is published, it is not available to the general

public. Click the “View” link to view a published page on the live site, or to preview an unpublished page.



## What’s up with section pages?

You may have noticed that *section pages* have a different display than other pages. They never have a checkbox next to them, and their “Status” column says, “Section page,” instead of the four workflow stages.

We’ll discuss section pages in more detail later, but for now just know that section pages are special page types that represent an entire content category. In a nutshell, *sections* are containers for other pages, and the *section page* is the cover page for that section.

Every section of the site has a section page. The homepage itself is a section page, because it’s the cover page for the container that is the entire site.

Because of their special status, section pages cannot be published, unpublished, added or deleted from the edit menu. Only accounts with webmaster or administrator privileges may perform those actions and then only from the “Section Structure” and “Section Properties” screens.

We’ll explore all of this in greater detail in [Chapter 4: The Page Types](#) and [Chapter 7: Sections and Content Categories](#).

## Batch-editing and deleting content

The toolbar at the top of the edit menu lets you batch-edit content items, applying changes to one or more pages, announcements or tips all at once.

To batch-edit content items, check the check boxes beside the items to edit. You can toggle all of the items in the menu by clicking the checkbox in the menu’s header row, at the top of the checkbox column. The toolbar “lights up” and becomes active when one or more items is checked.

Depending on your account privileges, you might not be allowed to delete or change the status of certain pages. In those cases, no checkbox is displayed.

### Delete

The “delete” button permanently deletes all selected items from the site (after asking you to confirm that, yes, you really want to do this).



### Be careful!

Deleting content from the edit menu is a permanent action and cannot be undone. Once a page is deleted, it’s gone for good.

## Change status

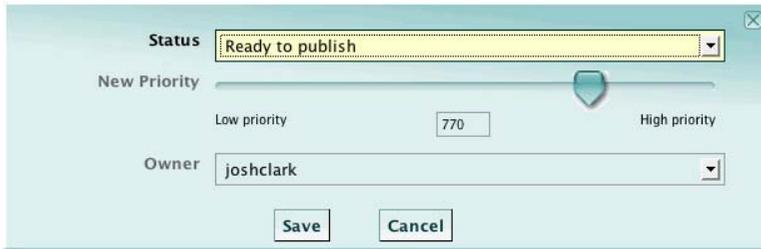


Figure 3.2. The “change status” dialog

The “change status” button updates three attributes of the selected items (for more about these attributes, see the [“Publishing Info”](#) section later in this chapter):

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Status       | Change the workflow status of the items (only accounts with publisher privileges or better are allowed to publish items to the public site). Leave the field at “no change” to maintain the current publication status. |
| New priority | Move the slider to select a new priority value for the selected items.  |
| Owner        | Select a new owner for the selected items, or leave the field at “no change” to maintain the current owner(s).  |

## Change section

The “change section” button reassigns the selected items to the site section(s) of your choice, updating the live site along the way if the items are published. Clicking the button takes you to a new screen where you select the section(s) to which you would like the content to be moved.

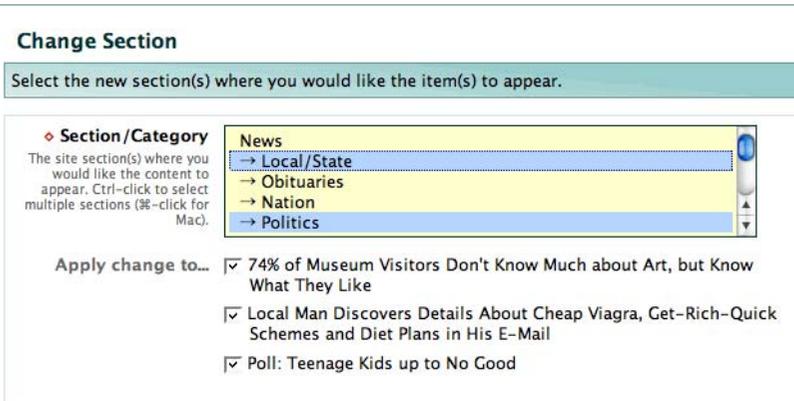


Figure 3.3. The “change section” screen

## Copy

The “copy” button creates new, unpublished duplicates of the selected items.

## Copy to site

The “copy to site” button copies the selected items to one or more other sites in your Big Medium installation. This button is not displayed if there are no other sites (or if you do not have privileges at those sites).

Clicking the button takes you to a new screen where you select the destination site(s), along with the publication status to assign the copies. Accounts with publisher, webmaster or administrator privileges may set the copies to “published,” which immediately publishes the copied content on the destination sites.



### How are copies assigned to sections at the new site?

Big Medium tries to assign the copies to similar sections at the new site. Specifically, it examines the assigned sections for the original site and looks for sections with the same slug name(s) at the new site. If one or more sections with matching slug names are found, the copy is assigned to those matching sections. If there are no matches, the item is assigned to the first main section of the site (even if that section is not active).

## Creating a new page

To add a new page, click the appropriate “New” link at the top of the edit menu:

- New article page
- New document download
- New link
- New podcast

You can also choose any of these options from the “New Page” menu. Clicking the “New Page” icon itself takes you directly to the “New Article” edit screen.

We’ll explore the distinctions between these types of pages a bit later in [Chapter 4: The Page Types](#). For now, we’ll focus on *articles*. Most sites consist primarily of article pages, the text-focused pages that present the site’s original content.

Feeling antsy to get started? Let’s do it: Click the “new article page” link to go to the edit screen for a new article.

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## The edit screen for article pages

The edit screen is the workshop where you assemble the text, images and media for each page. Big Medium will eventually take the information that you enter here and construct a webpage that uses your site's own unique design. Your job here is to provide the content building blocks for that process.

Think of a page as a collection of display elements: body text, images, document attachments, related links, pullquotes, author information, audio/video clips, etc. The edit screen is a web form that prompts for and displays all of these page elements.

Just because you *can* add all of these elements doesn't mean that you *have to*. For example, this is all that you need to do to add a new page to your site:

1. In the "Page Content" panel, enter your page title and page text.
2. In the "About the Page" panel, select the section of the site where you want the page to appear.
3. At the bottom of the page, in the "Publication Info" panel, set the page to "Published" (if your account has publisher, webmaster or administrator privileges).
4. Click the "Save" button at the bottom of the page, and your new page is immediately added to the site.

But Big Medium lets you do much more than add simple pages of text. The rest of this section explores the options and design elements that you can apply to your pages.

## Page Content

### Page Title

**The page title is a required field.** The page title is the all-purpose title of the page: It's the headline on the page itself, the text used for links to the page, and the title in the page's HTML `<title>` tag.

You can add bold or italic formatting to a page title by surrounding bold text with two asterisks and italic text with underscore marks:

```
I want to make **this text bold** and _this text italic_
```

### Page Content

The page content is the main body text of the page. This field is all about the *text* of your page. You can embed images, pullquotes, document attachments and other elements within the text, but you'll provide those items elsewhere in the edit screen. Here you focus on the words.

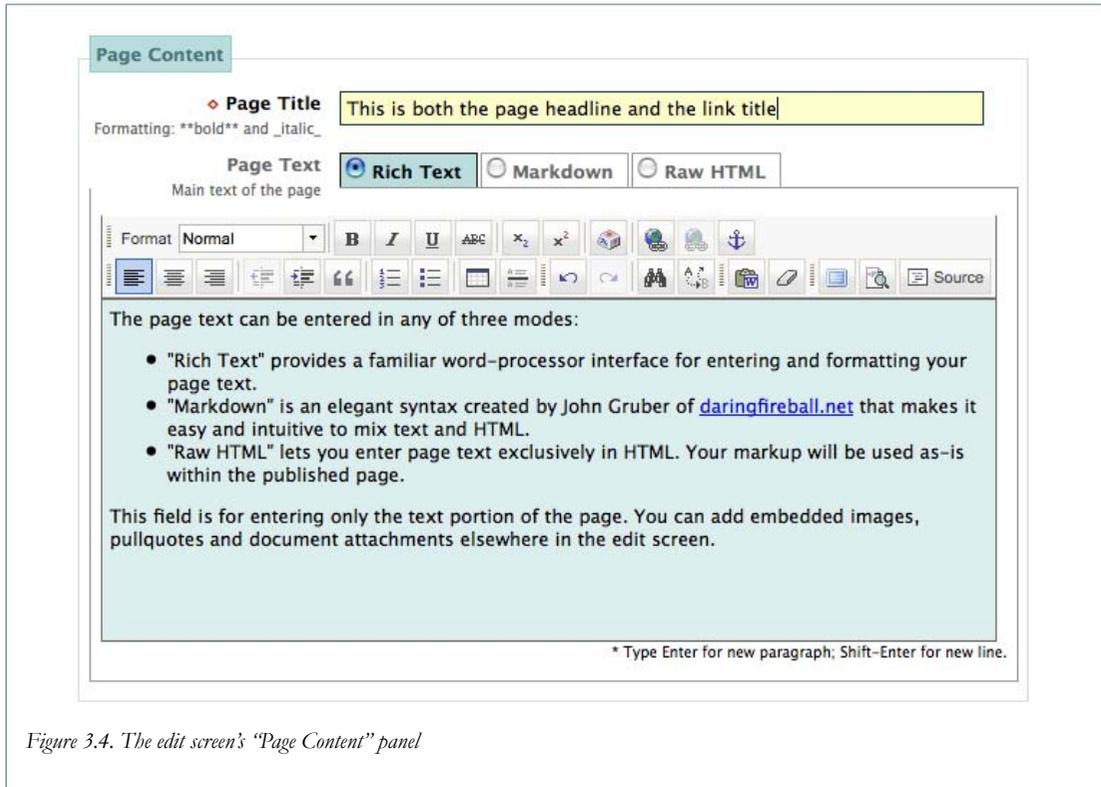


Figure 3.4. The edit screen's "Page Content" panel



## Rich-text formatting tips

**The Enter key.** Typing Enter in the rich-text editor automatically adds a new paragraph, inserting two line breaks. If you want only a single line break, click Shift-Enter.

**Cutting and pasting from other applications.** When you paste text from other applications into the rich-text editor, the formatting of that text often comes with it, including fonts and styles that may not match the design of your site. Big Medium does its best to correct these formatting differences behind the scenes when you save the page, but to avoid problems, it's recommended that you use the "paste from Word" button in the rich-text toolbar. This button pops up a window that lets you paste the text into a form and "clean" the formatting to make it more appropriate for your site.

**Starting from scratch.** You can also zap all of the formatting in the edit field and return it to plain unstyled text by clicking the "remove formatting" eraser button in the edit tool bar.

For more information, see [Appendix C: Editing Text with the Rich-Text Editor](#).

You can enter your text in any of three different formats:

- **Rich Text** provides a familiar WYSIWYG interface for formatting your text, similar to a word processor. For details, see [Appendix C: Editing Text with the Rich-Text Editor](#).
- **Markdown** is an elegant text-based syntax for formatting your text while also allowing you to blend in your own custom HTML markup. For details, see [Appendix D: Editing Text with Markdown](#).
- **Raw HTML** allows you to specify the entire text portion of the page in your own custom HTML. Go carefully: If your markup contains any errors, it could affect the display of the entire page.

## About the Page

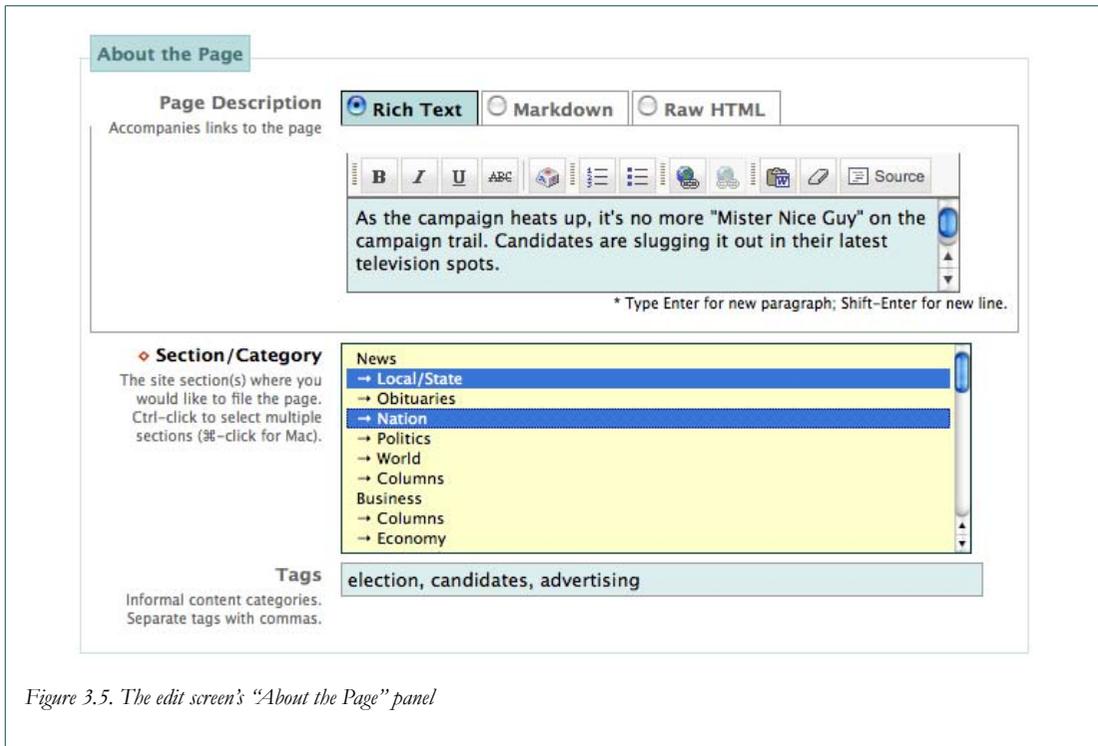


Figure 3.5. The edit screen's "About the Page" panel

### Page description

The page description typically accompanies links to the page, but this varies according to the site's custom settings. The description may also appear as a subhead on the page, again depending on the site's preferences. As with the page text, you can enter the description text in any of three formats: Rich Text, Markdown or Raw HTML.

## Section/Category

All pages must be assigned to one or more sections or subsections of the site. Sections represent the content categories of your site and determine the overall organization of its pages.

When published to the live site, the page is “filed” in the section(s) that you select here. Links to the page are displayed on the main section page for the section(s) as well as any parent sections, including the homepage itself.

In Figure 3.5, “The edit screen’s “About the Page” panel”, the “Local/State” and “Nation” sections are selected, which means that a link to the page would appear on the Local/State and Nation pages. Because those sections belong to the main section News, a link will also appear on the “News” section page. No need to specifically select News; by belonging to the Local/State and Nation sections, the page automatically belongs to the News section, too. It’s a family thing.

To select more than one section, control-click (or command-click for Mac) the sections that you want to include. Doing the same for already-selected sections deselects them.

## Tags

While sections define the big-picture category for the page, tags are about the nitty-gritty details. Tags are keywords, terms or phrases that help your visitors find pages about similar topics. The tags that you enter in the “Tags” field are displayed as links on the published page. These links take you to a page listing all pages that share that tag.

Enter as many tags as you want for the page; separate multiple tags with commas. To help you stay consistent in your tag names, Big Medium suggests tags as you type, based on previously entered tags. If you see a suggested tag that you want to use, click it to select it, or if it’s already selected, type the tab key. Big Medium will finish typing the tag for you.

For more about tags and their relationship to sections, see the [“What about tags?”](#) section in *Chapter 7: Sections and Content Categories*.

## Authors

Pages can have bylines to indicate the author of the page. To add an author, click the “Add person” link in the “Authors” panel. You can add as many authors as you like; click the “Add person” link for each author.

After clicking “Add person,” a form pops up and prompts you to select the author. You can choose an existing person from the site’s “people library” from the “Library” tab, or if it’s a new author, you can add him or her by clicking the “New” tab. (For more information about the people library, see *Chapter 6: The Libraries*.)

Immediately below the New/Library selection area is a place to enter an “author blurb,” a brief bio or snippet of descriptive text to appear on the page.

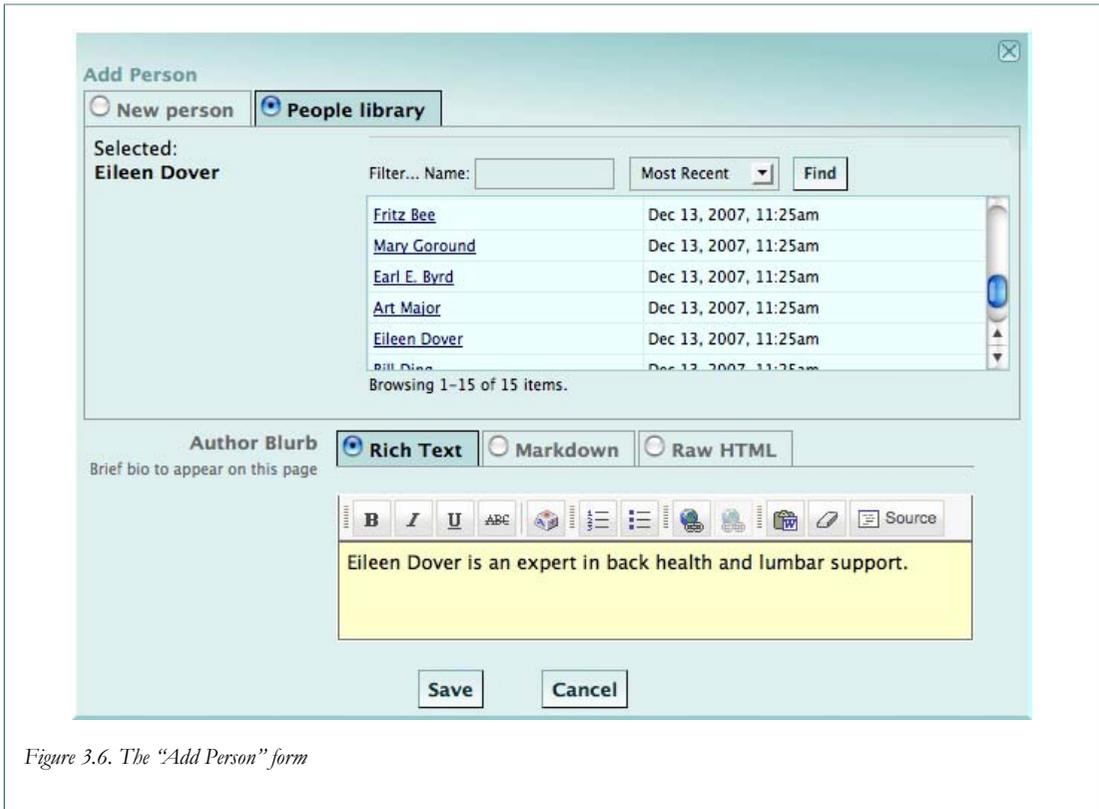


Figure 3.6. The “Add Person” form

After you add an author, the author is displayed on the edit screen in an individual edit box which previews the information about the author. To update an author’s information, click the “Edit” link on the author’s edit box. You can make changes in the “Edit” tab or select a completely different author in the “Library” tab.

If you do make changes in the “Edit” tab, those edits will also be applied to any other pages for which the person is author. That means that updating an author’s email address or changing her name to a freshly minted married name is a one-step process that is applied immediately across the entire site. (Note that this applies only to fields in the “Edit” tab, not to the author blurb, which is specific to the page.)

To remove an author from the page, click the “Remove” link on the author’s edit box. The person will remain in the site’s library but will no longer be associated as an author of this particular page.

If you have multiple authors on a page, they are displayed in the order that they are displayed on the page. To change the order, drag the authors into the order that you prefer: Click on the textured grip in the top left of the author’s edit box and drag it to its new position.

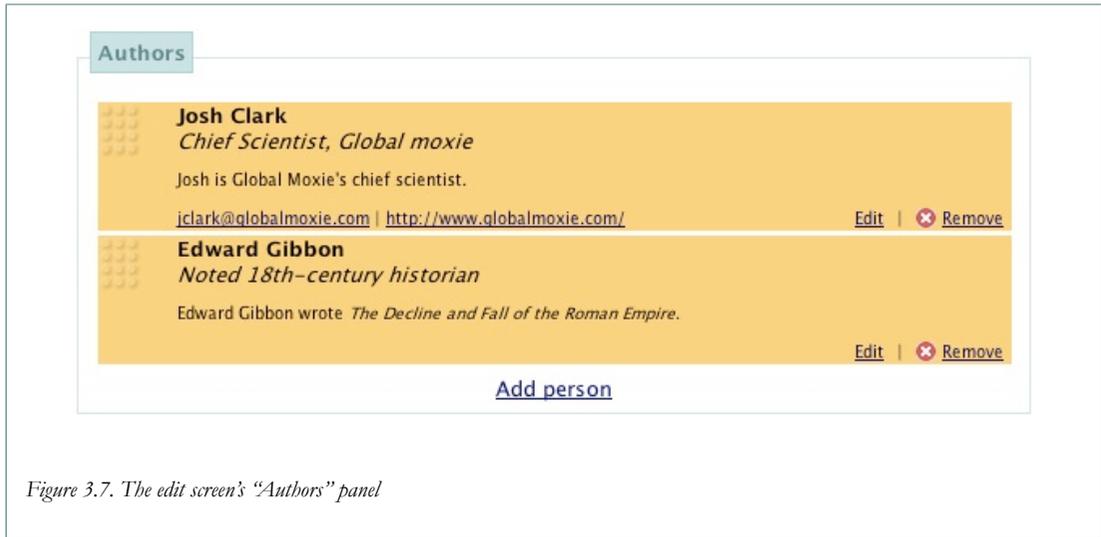


Figure 3.7. The edit screen's "Authors" panel

## Images & Media

You attach and display documents, images, audio and video to your page by clicking the appropriate link in the "Images & Media" panel: "Add audio/video," "Add document" or "Add image." You can add as many images, documents and media files as you like. Just click the relevant "add" link for each item that you want to add.

After clicking one of the "add" links, you're prompted to select the media item and provide some information about where you would like it to appear. Similar to the "people library" described above for authors, every media type has its own library, too. Click the "Library" tab to select a previously loaded image, document or audio/video file, or upload a new file in the "New" tab. (For more information about working with the media libraries, see [Chapter 6: The Libraries.](#))

Adding new documents and audio/video files is straightforward. Just give the item a name in the "Title" field and then click the "Browse" button to select the file from your hard drive. For images, you also have a few additional options, which we'll explore now.

### Adding and editing images and thumbnails

Big Medium allows you—encourages you, even—to load multiple sizes of the same image so that you can use the same image in different contexts. For example:

- A small, thumbnail image alongside links to the page
- A medium-sized image within the page itself
- A large image when visitors click on the link to zoom in on the image or watch a slideshow

This means that behind every image in the library are several different versions of that image, each in a different size. Big Medium takes care of handling which image size goes where,

based on the site’s image preferences. When you select an image and say that you want it to be displayed with links and in the page’s image gallery, Big Medium automatically picks the appropriate image size for those locations.

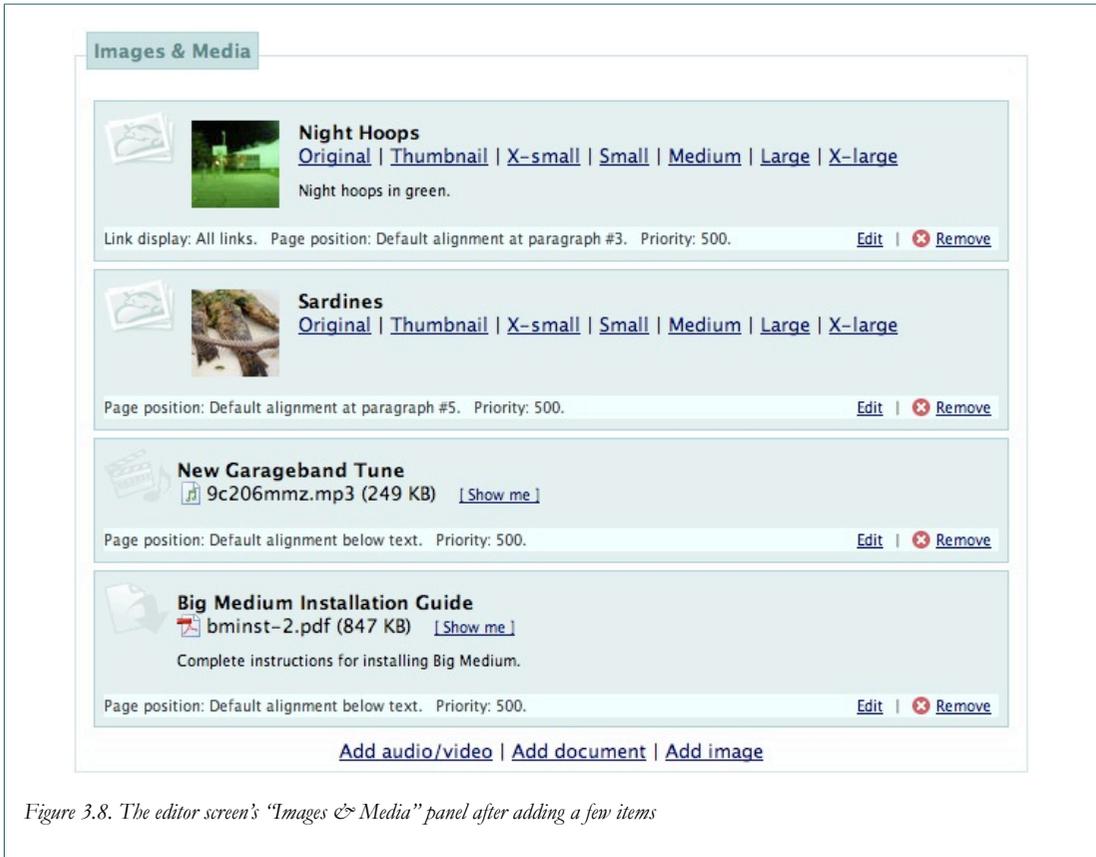


Figure 3.8. The editor screen’s “Images & Media” panel after adding a few items

## Auto-sizing images

If your web server has any of the four supported graphics libraries installed,<sup>1</sup> Big Medium will automatically generate all of the necessary image sizes for you when you upload your image file. Just upload the original image—a digital photograph, for example—and Big Medium will do the rest, churning out six or more alternate versions of your image. If your server is configured to do this for you, you’ll see an “Auto-size images” checkbox above the “Browse” field when you’re adding a new image.

All that you have to do is click the “Browse” button and select the image from your hard drive. When you click “Save,” Big Medium generates the various versions of the image that it needs.

<sup>1</sup>Big Medium’s auto-sizing feature requires one of the following Perl modules to be installed: [Image::Magick](http://www.imagemagick.org/script/perl-magick.php) (a.k.a. [PerlMagick](http://www.imagemagick.org/script/perl-magick.php)) [http://www.imagemagick.org/script/perl-magick.php], [GD](http://search.cpan.org/dist/GD/) [http://search.cpan.org/dist/GD/] or [Imager](http://search.cpan.org/dist/Imager/) [http://search.cpan.org/dist/Imager/]. If you’re running a Unix-based server, the auto-sizing feature will also work if [NetPBM](http://netpbm.sourceforge.net/) [http://netpbm.sourceforge.net/] is installed. Check with your server admin or hosting company for details.

By default, Big Medium manages images in the following sizes and dimensions, but accounts with webmaster or administrator privileges can add additional custom sizes (see [Chapter 12: Image Management](#)):

- Original (the original image, untouched)
- Thumbnail (60x60 pixels)
- X-small (100x100 pixels)
- Small (200x200 pixels)
- Medium (400x400 pixels)
- Large (600x600 pixels)
- X-Large (800x800 pixels)

## Loading images manually

If your server is not configured to auto-size images, you'll instead get edit fields for each of Big Medium's image sizes. Or, if your server *can* auto-size images but you prefer to enter one or more sizes manually, you can do so by unchecking the "Auto-size images" option.

Loading images manually also allows you to enter images as URLs instead of file uploads. To enter a URL for an image instead of a file, click "URL" and enter the web address in the field. Otherwise, leave "File" selected and click the "Browse" button to locate the image file to upload.

Big Medium does not resize or otherwise touch images that are loaded manually. The images are taken exactly as you supply them, so you should be careful that your images all fit the size indicated for each field.



### Add an image for each size you plan to use

Although you don't have to load all image sizes, be sure that you load the image sizes for the contexts that you plan to use. We'll discuss these contexts more in a second, but for example, let's say that you plan to use an image with links and in a gallery slideshow. If your site is configured to use the "thumbnail" size for link images, the "small" size for gallery images, and "large" for slideshow images, you should be sure to load at least those sizes. *Otherwise, Big Medium will not display the image at all in those contexts.*

If you're not sure which image size is used in which context, administrator and webmaster accounts can find this info in the site's HTML preferences.

Figure 3.9. Manual entry of image sizes

## Editing existing media items

To edit an image, document or audio/video file that you have already added to the page, click the “Edit” link in the item’s edit box. When the edit form pops up, click the “Replace this file” or “Replace this image” link to reveal a field to upload a new media file. To cancel the change and leave the current file, click the “Replace this file” link again or click the “Cancel” link.

Figure 3.10. Editing a document.



## Editing media items updates other pages linking to the item

When you change an item in the library, the change ripples across all of the pages that share it.



## I don't always like Big Medium's auto-sized images. What can I do?

You may occasionally find that auto-sized images are cropped in a way that you don't like or perhaps have lost quality after processing. Whatever the reason, you may occasionally want to load your own lovingly hand-crafted image into one or more of the image sizes. No problem: You can replace one or more of Big Medium's auto-generated image sizes with your own custom image by loading it manually.

First, create the custom images in Photoshop or your favorite image editor for the image sizes that you want to customize. Big Medium will not change/resize these images, so be sure that they are the correct dimensions for the size you're customizing.

Load your image as usual, with the "Auto-size image" option checked. Big Medium will generate the auto-sized versions of all of the various sizes.

In the edit box for the image to update, click "Edit" and, when the edit form comes up, click "Replace this image" and uncheck the "Auto-size image" checkbox to display the manual entry form.

Load your image files into the fields for the image sizes to customize. You're not obliged to replace all of an image's sizes; if you don't specify a custom file or URL for an individual size, the current image for that size will remain intact.

The result is that you'll have a customized image for each of the sizes/formats that you loaded manually, and the auto-generated image sizes will remain for the sizes/formats that you did not customize.

## Reusing and sharing media items

Just like real-world libraries, the items in the Big Medium media library are available to be shared and used over and over again. Once an image, document or media file is added to the library, it can be used in other pages and contexts. For example, you can add an image as part of one page's image gallery and then reuse it as the link image for another page.

When you remove a media item from the page (by clicking "remove" in the item's edit box), you remove the image from that page only. The item continues to exist in the library for use by other pages.

By default, Big Medium allows other editors of the same site to use images and media files that you upload to the site. In this way, everyone contributes constantly to the site's media libraries. If you prefer not to make a media file available for other editors, however, you can uncheck the "Share" option when adding or editing the item. This prevents the item from appearing in the "Library" tab for other editors (except for editors with webmaster or administrator privileges; those accounts have full access to all website files and pages).

You can also choose to suppress the item from the library altogether by unchecking the "Include in library for later reuse" option. When you do that, the media item will no longer be displayed in the library tab for any editor.

For more about Big Medium's media libraries, see [Chapter 6: The Libraries](#).

## Page position, priority and captions for media items

Below the Edit/Library box in the media edit form, you'll find several fields that indicate where and how you would like the media element to be displayed.

**Include with Links.** This field determines whether the item should be displayed with links to the page:

- No links.
- All links.
- Spotlight links. The media is included only when the page's link is the "spotlight," the featured link on the homepage or section page.
- Non-spotlight links. The media is included only when the page's link is not the spotlight link.

**Page Position.** This field determines where the media item should be displayed on the page itself.

- Image gallery (images only). This option places the image in a gallery of thumbnails on the page. When a visitor clicks any of the thumbnails in the page's image gallery, a slideshow of all of the gallery images is launched.
- Above text.
- Align with paragraph: #. Enter the number of the paragraph of the page text with which you want the media item to align (*e.g.*, enter 1 to align with the first paragraph of the page text, 2 to align with the second, 3 for the third, etc.).
- Below text.
- Other position on page. This option allows the site's designer to specify a certain position to display certain media items, outside of the main body text of the page. For example, if the site's templates include the `<%images_limit="other"%>` widget, items with the "other position" setting will be displayed at that widget location.
- Do not display on page.

**Page alignment.** Determines the horizontal alignment of the item. The “gear” icon indicates that the site’s default alignment should be used; otherwise, choose the left, center or right alignment icon to specify the alignment of the item and how text should flow around it.

**Priority.** If more than one of the same media type is assigned to display with links or at the same position on a page, the item with the highest priority gets displayed first. Change the priority higher or lower by dragging the slider.

**Caption.** Optional text to appear as a caption below the media element.

**Link URL.** For images only, you can specify an optional URL where the visitor should be sent after clicking the image. If no URL is specified, the visitor will instead be shown a large version of the image. Note that this setting has no effect on images in image galleries (clicking the image always enlarges the image) or on images that appear with links (clicking the image always takes you to the linked page).



## How do I change the order of images in the image gallery?

The order of images in a page’s image gallery is based on the priority setting for each image. Images with the highest priority are displayed first, and those with the lowest are displayed last. When more than one image in the gallery has the same priority setting, the most recently updated image is displayed first.

To place the images in a precise order, set the priority of the first image higher than the rest, the priority of the second image just below that, and so on so that the last image has the lowest priority setting.

## Adding lists of documents to your site

To add a list of document files to an article page, click the “Add document” link for each item to add to the page. To make the documents display as a single vertical list, assign all of the documents to the same “page position” (e.g., “align with paragraph 4,” “above text” or “below text”). For best results, set each document to be center-aligned in the “page alignment” field. Note that when setting the page position to a specific paragraph, center-aligned documents appear *above* that paragraph.

You can set the order of each document by adjusting its priority; the document with the highest priority will appear first in the list, and the document with the lowest will appear last.

## Better to add documents as individual pages?

When working with large lists of documents, you may find it easier to work with your collection as *document download pages* rather than attaching them to an article page. We discuss document download pages in the next chapter, but briefly: You can add a document file as its own page entry and assign it to a section, just as you would an article page. The document link is then displayed on the section page in whatever sort order your designer has established in the site’s HTML preferences.

This means that you can have a single section or subsection of your site dedicated to displaying your list of documents. This approach automates the display of your documents and can ease the process of working with and formatting large lists of documents. For more info, see “[Document downloads](#)” in the *Chapter 4: The Page Types*.

## Pullquotes

To add pullquotes to your page, click “Add pullquote” in the edit screen’s “Pullquotes” panel. You can add as many pullquotes as you like; click “Add pullquote” and fill out the form for each pullquote you want to add.



### What’s a pullquote?

In magazines and newspapers, a *pullquote* is an excerpt from the text that is displayed in a larger typeface as a design element or to highlight an important point. That’s how pullquotes are used in Big Medium, too, but you can also create Big Medium pullquotes in a normal typeface as a means to create a sidebar, add an affiliate link or display any other secondary text.

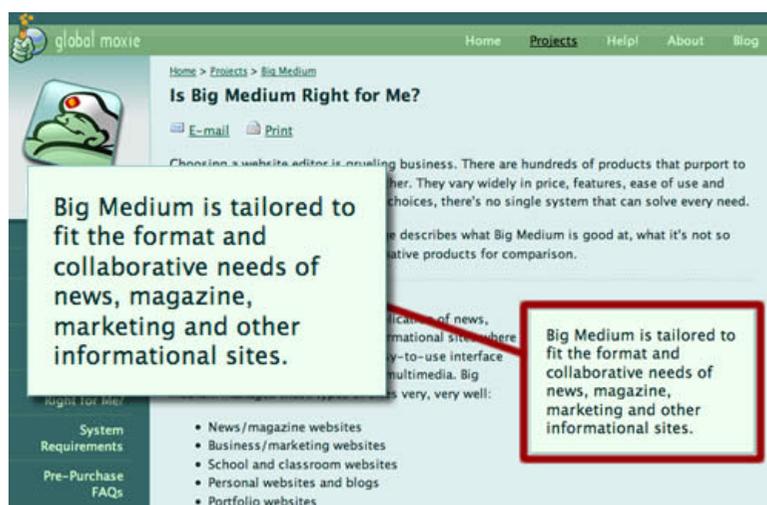


Figure 3.11. A pullquote in the wild

When adding or editing a pullquote, the edit form prompts you for three fields in addition to the pullquote text itself:

**Pullquote Position.** This field determines where the pullquote should be displayed on the page. The options work in the same manner as described above in “Page position, priority and captions for media items”: “Above text,” “Align with paragraph #,” “Below text,” “Other position on page,” and “Do not display on page.”

**Pullquote Alignment.** This field determines the horizontal alignment of the pullquote and how text should flow around it. The gear indicates that the site’s default alignment should be used; otherwise, choose left, right or center alignment.

**Pullquote Size.** Choose big or small text (small text can be useful to create a sidebar or a box of other secondary text).

## Related Links

While it’s easy enough to use Big Medium’s editing tools to include links in a page’s [body text](#), it’s often useful to have a separate portion of the page dedicated to related links. To add a link to the “related links” section of your page, click “Add link” in the “Related Links” panel of the edit screen.



Figure 3.12. The “Add Link” form in the “Related Links” panel

There are two types of links that you can add to the “Related Links” section:

Internal link (“This Site”)

This is a link to another page in the same site. Internal links are automatically updated when the linked page is moved, deleted, published or unpublished. To select an internal link, click the “This Site” tab, and select the page to which you want to link. You can select unpublished pages, too. They’re indicated in the menu with gray, italic text, and the link will not be added to the page until the linked page is eventually published.

External link (“Elsewhere”)

This is a link to any other page outside of the site or that’s not managed by Big Medium. To add an

external link, click the “Elsewhere” tab, and enter the URL and link text.

The “New Window” field allows you to specify whether each link should open in a new window.

If you have multiple links in the “Related Links” panel, you can change their order by dragging them into the desired position. To change a link’s position, click the textured grip on the top left of its edit box and drag it to its new spot.

## Page Preferences

The “Page Preferences” panel is collapsed when you first open the edit screen; to display it, click the “Page Preferences” link.

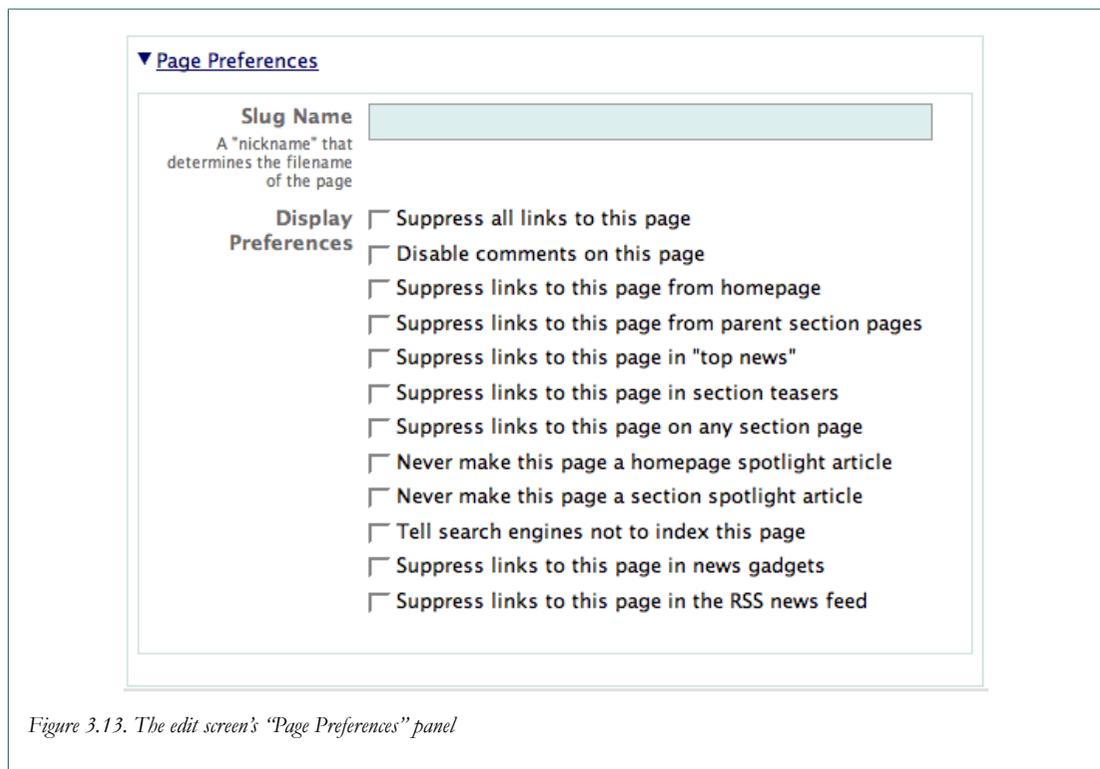


Figure 3.13. The edit screen’s “Page Preferences” panel

### Slug name

The *slug name* determines the filename of the page. For example, if you choose the slug `man-bites-dog`, the filename for the page will be `man-bites-dog.shtml`. If you do not provide your own slug name, Big Medium will assign a slug name based on the page title. If your page title is “Man Bites Dog,” for example, Big Medium would use `man-bites-dog`.

**Choosing a good slug name helps your search engine rank.** Having relevant keywords in a page’s URL tends to give a page extra Google juice. To help search engines sort out the

words in the URL, it's good practice to separate each word with a hyphen, as in the “man-bites-dog” example above.

Every slug name must be unique; no two pages can share the same slug name. If you select a slug name that's already taken, Big Medium will adjust it automatically. A slug can contain only letters and numbers—no spaces or punctuation, except for hyphens and underscores.



## Why “Slug”?

The term *slug* (or *slugline*) is an old bit of journalism jargon, borrowed from the printer's term “slug”—a compositor's type line of identifying marks or instructions, inserted temporarily in text. In the publishing world, “slug” came to mean a one- or two-word placeholder title to identify articles, often for layout purposes. With the rise of computer systems in newspaper organizations, the slug became the filename of an article in the system.

## Display preferences

The checkbox options listed under display preferences allow you to specify certain page behaviors, typically to indicate places where you do not want the page to appear. By checking these options, you can prevent links to the page from appearing in certain places on the site.

## For Search Engines

Big Medium adds several pieces of information to every page to help search engines interpret and index your pages. These “meta tags” are not displayed in the browser when visitors come to your site but are nevertheless visible to search engines. These tags include the *description* and *keywords* meta tags. You can enter the contents of these fields in the “For Search Engines” panel. If you do not supply an entry for the “description meta tag” field, Big Medium will use the description text from the “page description” field.

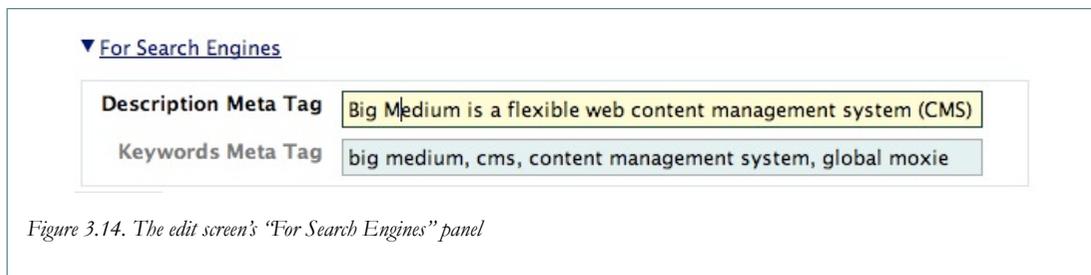


Figure 3.14. The edit screen's “For Search Engines” panel

Once upon a time, the description and keyword tags were very influential in determining how search engines would index and rank pages. As more and more webmasters used the tags to try to manipulate their rankings, however, search engine companies responded by reducing the influence of these tags. Google, for example, ignores the keywords meta tag completely, while other search engines have reduced its importance in indexing pages.

The description tag is often (but not always) used by search engines in the text description shown along with search results. While adding a description may not do much to influence a page's search rank, it may at least give you some degree of control over how your page is described.

Although fewer and fewer search engines still pay attention to the keywords tag, it still can't hurt to provide relevant keywords here to help highlight the words and phrases that best describe the page's content. [Yahoo advises](#)<sup>2</sup>: "Use a distinct list of keywords that relate to the specific page on your site instead of using one broad set of keywords for every page." Also, "spamming" the keywords with multiple uses of the same keyword can backfire, causing search engines to ignore the phrase or even the entire page altogether.

The upshot here is that you shouldn't expect meta content to make dramatic differences in your search engine ranking. However, adding meta content that accurately reflects the content of your page text *may* provide a modest boost in rankings and, at the very least, can offer some measure of control over the page's description in search results.

## Publishing Info

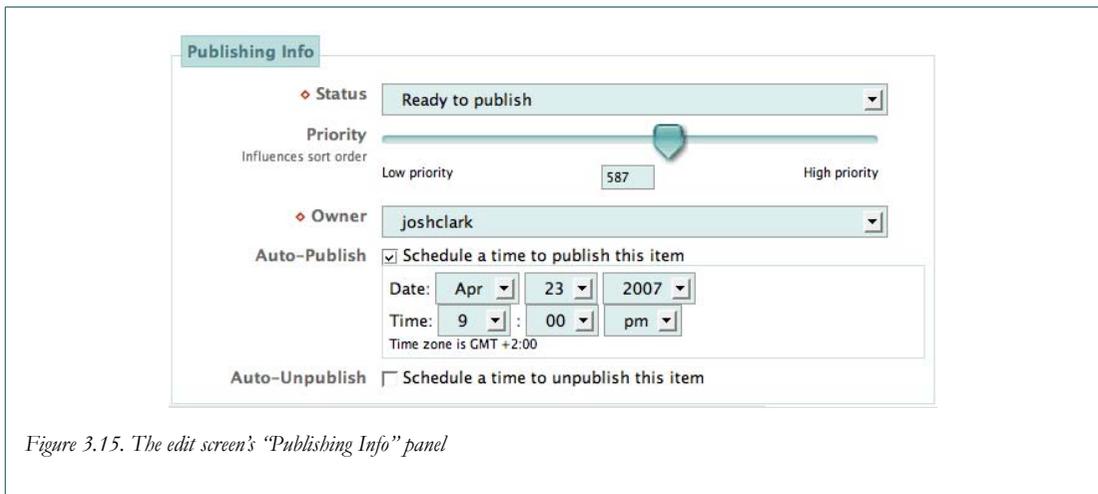


Figure 3.15. The edit screen's "Publishing Info" panel

### Status

The status field indicates the page's status in the editorial workflow. When a page is set to *publish*, it's made available to the public site. All other settings (*draft*, *editing* and *ready to publish*) mean that the page is not yet available to the public and may only be accessed through the control panel. Only accounts with publisher, webmaster or administrator privileges can publish a page.

Aside from the published/unpublished state, the specific labels are just that: labels to help you identify where pages are in the editing process. Use these labels in whatever way makes

<sup>2</sup> <http://help.yahoo.com/help/us/ysearch/ranking/ranking-02.html>

sense for your own organization's editing process. If you're editing your own blog, for example, "draft" and "publish" may be the only workflow states that you ever use, while larger organizations may find the "editing" and "ready to publish" states useful as well.

## Priority

The priority setting influences the sort order of a page in lists of links. Sort order can be customized by accounts with webmaster or administrator privileges, but the default behavior is to list links on the public site by priority (highest first) and then, for items with the same priority, by publication date (most recent first). Assuming that your site uses this default sort order, that means that you can move pages higher or lower in the link list by adjusting their priority.

To change the priority value, drag the slider to a new position, or type a number from zero to 1000 in the text field just below the slider (zero is the lowest priority, 1000 is the highest).

## Owner

This field is displayed only to accounts with editor privileges or better and specifies the account that owns the page. This affects who can edit the page (writer accounts can edit only pages that they own) and who gets e-mail alerts related to the page (you can choose to receive alerts for actions related only to pages you own; for more, see [Chapter 13: Account Management](#)).

## Auto-Publish

To schedule a page to be published automatically at a specific date and time., check the "Change status to 'published' at a scheduled time" option and select the date and time.



### Can I use auto-publish to backdate pages?

You betcha. You may occasionally want to set a page's publication date in the past, if you're adding previously published content to a new site, for example. You can do this by setting the auto-publish date to the date you wish to use. (Doing this also sets the publication status to "published" when you save the page.)

## Auto-Unpublish

To remove a page from the public site at a specific time, check the "Change status to 'draft' at a scheduled time" option and select the date and time.

## Save

Your edits are saved only when you click the "Save" button at the bottom of the page. If you try to browse away from the edit page before you save your changes, Big Medium will ask if you really want to discard your unsaved changes.

When you save a page, Big Medium updates the page with any changes:

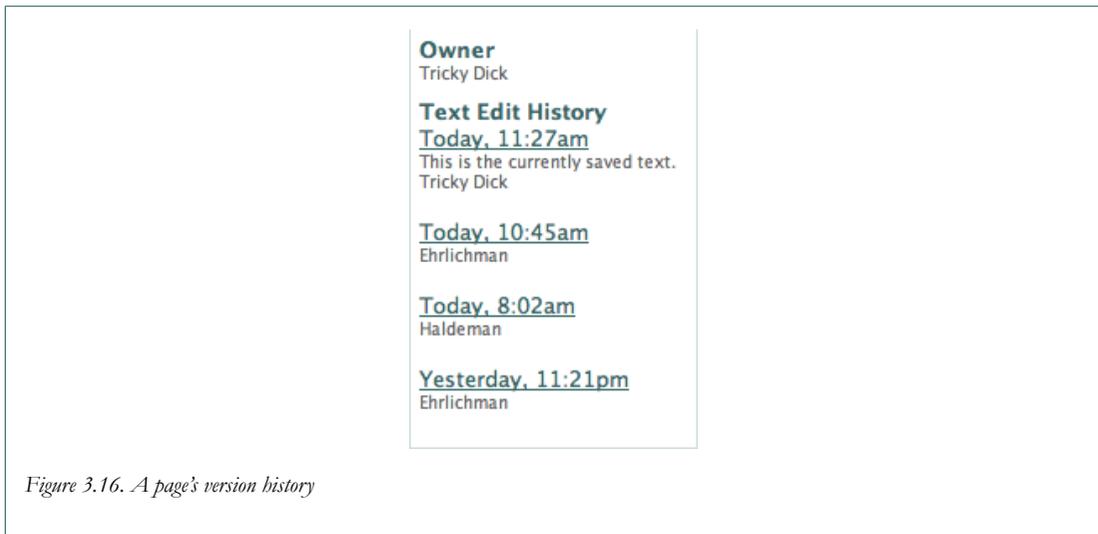
- If you're publishing a page for the first time, Big Medium adds the page to the site and adds links to the page on your homepage and section pages.
- If you're editing a published page, Big Medium applies your changes to the site, updating the page itself as well as any links to the page.
- If you're "unpublishing" a published page, Big Medium removes the page from the site along with any links to the page.

## Viewing or previewing your page

After saving your page, you can see the results by clicking the page's "View" link from the main edit menu.

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## Text edit history: A paper trail for your pages



Big Medium's offers a basic *version control system* that lets you review the edit history for any page of your site. You can compare the current text to any previous version and, if you like, you can replace the current text with that earlier revision.

The text edit history is displayed in the left column of a page's edit screen. The date and time of each change to the page's main text is displayed, along with the name of the editor who made the change.

To compare your current text to any previous version, click that version's link. Big Medium displays the text, highlighting the changes made since the previous version. Text removed from the earlier revision is crossed out in red. New text is shown in green.

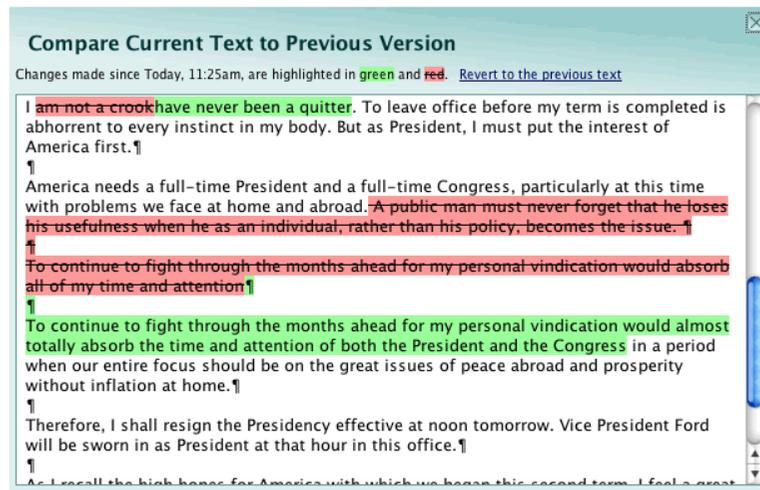


Figure 3.17. Comparing to a previous version

If you decide that you prefer the earlier version, click the “revert to the previous version” link. The current text is replaced by the old text. (As with all text changes, reverting to the previous version isn’t final until you click the “Save” button.)

## Some limitations

The edit history reflects changes *only in the main text* of pages.

Changes to documents, images, media and other text fields for the page are not included in the review. Likewise, reverting to the text of a previous version changes only the main text. Other fields remain unchanged.

Also, when comparing your text to a previous version, the comparison does not include formatting (e.g., bold/italic text, tables, indentation, etc.). The comparison shows you changes only to the plain text itself.

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## One-click editing: A shortcut from the live site

One-click editing lets you jump into editing from any page on the published site. If enabled, the feature displays edit links on every page, allowing you to add a new page or go straight to the edit screen for the current page.

These links are shown only to editors; they are not visible to the general public. To enable these links in your browser, click the “One-click editing” link in the left-column menu of the Big Medium control panel. This displays the links *on your current computer and for the current site only*. If you use multiple computers, you have to enable one-click editing separately on each machine. Similarly, if you use Big Medium to edit sites in different domains, you have to enable the feature separately for each site.

To stop displaying the links, click "Hide edit links" in the one-click editing bar on the published site. The links disappear immediately and will not show up again until you re-enable them from the Big Medium control panel.

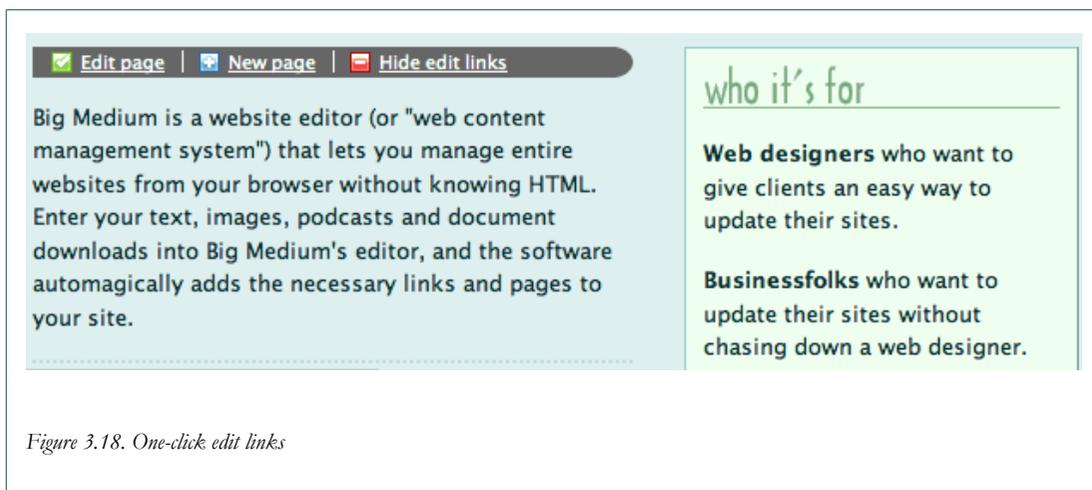


Figure 3.18. One-click edit links

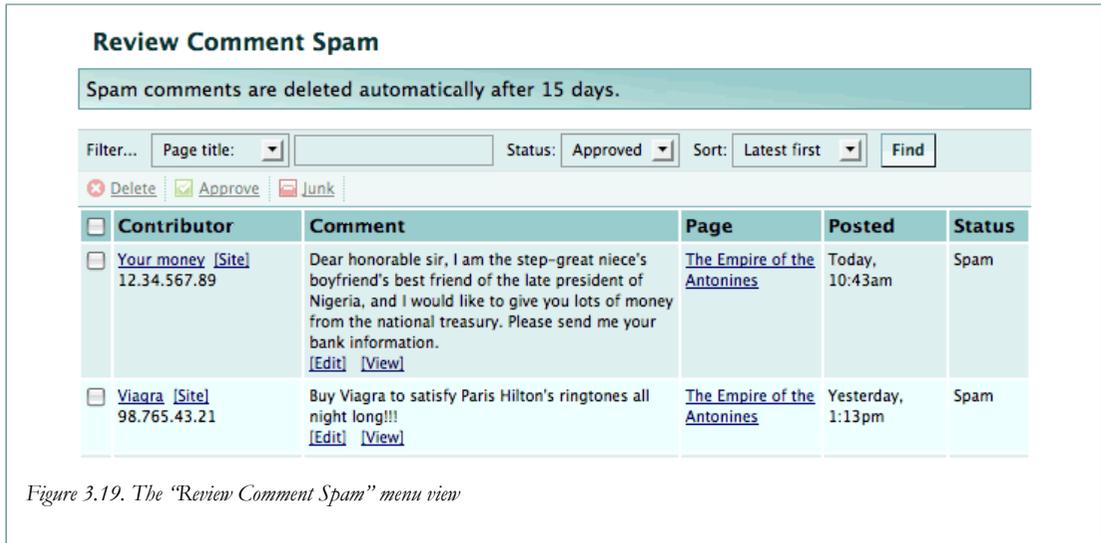
## Editing and reviewing visitor comments

Accounts with publisher, webmaster or administrator privileges can edit and review comments posted to the site by visitors. Three options in the control panel's "Edit" menu take you to three different views of the comment menu:

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Edit Comments          | Review and edit comments already visible on the public site.   |
| Review Queued Comments | Review and edit "moderated" comments that have been held for your review and have not yet been added to the public site. |
| Review Comment Spam    | Review and edit comments marked as spam.   |

All of these options display their specific content in the comment menu, along with the IP address used to post each comment. You can further adjust the displayed comments via the toolbar at the top of the menu, filtering comments by page or contributor name and choosing to display in chronological or reverse chronological order.

To delete a comment, check its checkbox and click the "Delete" button in the toolbar. The comment is permanently removed from the database and, if applicable, removed from the public site. **This is permanent and cannot be undone.**



To approve a queued/moderated comment or a comment marked as spam, check its checkbox and click the “Approve” button in the toolbar. The comment will be added to the public site.

To mark a comment as spam, check its checkbox and click the “Junk” button in the toolbar. The comment will be removed from the public site and its status set to spam.

## Editing comments

To edit a comment, including the name, e-mail or URL of a contributor, click the “Edit” link shown below the comment excerpt in the comment menu. This takes you to the comment’s edit screen, where you can make your changes.

Comments are always formatted using Markdown syntax. See [Appendix D: Editing Text with Markdown](#) for details.

## Comment spam

If your Big Medium installation is configured to use the [Akismet anti-spam service](#)<sup>3</sup> (see [Appendix B: Spam Prevention with Akismet](#)), all comments will be screened for spam as they are submitted. Comments identified as spam are not added to the public site but are instead tossed into the spam bin. These spam messages are permanently deleted after 15 days unless you change their status before that time.

If a good comment is incorrectly identified as spam (a “false positive”), you can correct that by going to the “Review Comment Spam” screen and approving the comment. This moves the message out of the spam bin, adds it to the public site and notifies Akismet about the mistake.

<sup>3</sup> <http://akismet.com/>

Likewise, if a spam message weasels past the Akismet filter, you can mark it as spam by going to the “Edit Comments” screen and marking it as junk. This moves the message to the spam bin, removes it from the public site and notifies Akismet that the message should have been marked as spam.

## Moderated comments

Accounts with webmaster or administrator privileges can configure the site to hold all comments for review (or “*moderate*” them) before adding them to the public site. If Akismet is enabled for the site, you also have the option to hold comments for review if there’s a problem connecting to the Akismet service. See the “[<%comments%>](#)” entry in [Chapter 10: Widgets](#) for details about these preferences.

Moderated comments may be reviewed from the “Review Queued Comments” screen, and you should regularly scan these comments to approve them or mark them as junk.

You can choose to receive automatic e-mail alerts when comments are moderated by subscribing to the appropriate e-mail alert from your account page. See “[E-mail alerts](#)” in [Chapter 13: Account Management](#) for more details.